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THE FACTS ABOUT FACTS FORUM

By VICTOR LASKY

THAT WE ARE LIVING in an age in which words have lost their meanings was never better demonstrated than by the recent action of a group dedicated to "cultural freedom" attempting to throttle such freedom for a group it doesn't like.

The American Committee for Cultural Freedom actually boasted in a press release that it had persuaded the National Broadcasting Co. not to air a show proposed by Facts Forum.

Facts Forum, an organization founded by H. L. Hunt, a Texas oilman reputed to be one of the wealthiest of the breed, states he is "dedicated to arousing public interest in important current events and overcoming public apathy to public issues."

It presents five radio and TV discussion programs. Two of them, "State of the Nation" and "Answers for Americans" are moderated and produced by Hardy Burt, veteran news analyst and former publicity man for Eric Johnston. A former FBI agent, Dan Smoot, handles "Facts Forum" radio and TV programs. Lately, "Reporter's Round-up," produced by the Mutual Network and moderated by Robert Hurleigh, was added to the roster.

Recently, Facts Forum came up with an idea it broached to NBC. It was willing to pay production costs for a series of nightly debates on the day's news between a "liberal" like Elmer Davis and a "conservative" like Hardy Burt, the debaters subject to NBC's approval.

So what happened? Norman Thomas, in behalf of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, wrote to NBC denouncing the proposal as "controversial," insisting that "nothing is simpler than for a man to put up a pretense of controversy by picking the opponents and making sure that one side is always the weaker." (Which may give some idea of what Mr. Thomas thinks of Elmer Davis.)

At any rate, the A.C.C.F. announced that NBC would not put on the show.

Unable to understand how a "cultural freedom" group could involve itself in telling a network who it should or should not be using, the writer asked Mr. Thomas for a bill of particulars on how Facts Forum had violated "proper principles of fair play."

The writer said he knew "nothing about Mr. Hunt, his views and motives." "But," he asked, "why can't you give him the benefit of the doubt when he says he is interested solely in presenting current issues as impartially as possible? I was under the impression you believe a man is innocent until proved guilty."

Thus far, Mr. Thomas has not backed up his generalized attacks on Facts Forum.

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If it can be proved, as is constantly alleged, that Facts Forum engages in far-right politics, or any kind of politics, then its tax-exempt status should be removed.

Such a charge has been leveled by Rep. Wayne Hays, who recently staged a well-publicized walkout from hearings of the Reece Committee, after Mr. Hays accused a witness of using "a scattergun technique" in citing several persons "in a derogatory fashion."

But Mr. Hays, in demanding — as was his right — a probe of Facts Forum, was quoted by the Associated Press on May 11 as follows:

"Facts Forum is not only a propaganda machine, but it puts up money to defeat people for Congress like me. That's what I call bad propaganda."

Asked for proof, Mr. Hays replied that he had "explained to the press that my remark was meant to indicate that Facts Forum puts up money to put slanted programs on the air . . . I certainly did not mean to imply that Facts Forum puts money into political campaigns."

But this explanation never reached print, an AP spokesman explaining Mr. Hays never asked for any "correction." Needless to say the original Hays quote was circulated far and wide by various individuals and publications who view Facts Forum as evil incarnate. Why?

THE ONLY POSSIBLE explanation is that Facts Forum consistently gives the conservative side a break. However, not all its critics can be labeled pinkos. Facts Forum has somehow managed to gain the enmity of such conservative newspapers as the *Providence Bulletin* and the *Dallas News*

In the case of the *News,* the criticism apparently stems from an incident taking place before Facts Forum was born. H. L. Hunt, who lives in Dallas, had criticized an alleged overplay of liberal columnists by the *News.* He suggested that conservative commentators be given an equal break. As he soon found out, however, no newspaper likes to be told how to use its newsprint.

But, whatever Mr. Hunt's private views, the bulk of the criticism directed at Facts Forum appears to be without foundation in fact.

For example, on January 16, 1953, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote to Mr. Hunt, in part as follows:

"Someone from Texas has just sent me the pamphlet on UNESCO which they tell me you have financed to the tune of some $700,000 a year. I wonder if you realize how misleading your pamphlet is and what incorrect impressions it leaves with people. I cannot believe, Sir, that you are spending money to destroy the UN and UNESCO, or any other world organizations, since such organizations form the only machinery through which we . . . have a chance of eventually building a peaceful world."

On January 26, Mr. Hunt replied, as follows:

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"Your Texas informant is alarmingly extravagant with my funds and inaccurate as to my affiliations. I have not been working with Gerald L. K. Smith type persons on UNESCO . . . You have correctly assumed in your final paragraph that I would not spend money to destroy any organization which is building a peaceful world . . . "

Mrs. Roosevelt replied on February 5:

"I am sorry for the delay in answering your letter . . . I found out from later information that the pamphlet I had reference to in my first letter was put out by a Mr. Bond. With many regrets for having troubled you, I am very sincerely yours . . ."

NOT ALL of Facts Forum's critics have been so gracious about admitting errors. Item: *Time,* the *Daily Worker,* the *Providence Journal,* the *New York Post, Reporter,* and Drew Pearson, constantly describe Facts Forum as a propaganda agency for Joe McCarthy. Mr. Hunt is accused of financing the Senator's "drive for the Presidency." At the same time, the anti-Catholic *Christian Science Monitor* has accused Mr. Hunt of anti-Catholicism. That an anti-Catholic can promote a Catholic for the Presidency doesn't seem to add up.

The fact is no Facts Forum program has ever advocated anyone for political office. The fact is that Mr. Hunt claims not to have contributed a nickel to Senator McCarthy. Even if he had, there still would be no connection with Facts Forum.

Item: According to the *Providence Journal,* Facts Forum distributes books like Garet Garrett's *The People's Pottage* and John T. Flynn's *While You Slept.*

The fact is that Facts Forum's 25,000-volume library also circulates books by Norman Thomas! A right wing critic would thus accuse Facts Forum of promoting socialism.

Item: According to Pearson, "Hunt's and McCarthy's potent backing have put Facts Forum on about 200 radio and 40 TV stations, not counting the ABC network. Perhaps one reason for its success is the Eisenhower appointment of Robert E. Lee to the F.C.C." And a publicist named Barry Gray has stated that "the networks were bludgeoned by Hunt into providing time . . ."

The fact is no one bludgeoned anyone. Network time had been obtained by Hardy Burt who states, "I've never had any contact or communications with anybody on the F.C.C."

Item: According to dozens of critics, Facts Forum stacks its shows in behalf of "McCarthyism."

The fact is that McCarthy has appeared on but one of the hundreds of shows originated by Facts Forum. The fact also is that, if anything, Facts Forum has leaned over backwards to give the "liberal" side a break.

CURIOUSLY, in a series of articles "exposing" Facts Forum in the *New York Post,* no mention was made of the fact that its editor, James Wechsler, had been a guest on "Answers for Americans."

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Other guests have included W. Averell Harriman, Representatives Jack Javits, Abe Multer and Emanuel Celler, Donald Rogers and Luke Carroll of the *N.Y. Herald Tribune,* Clarence Streit, Clarence Senior, Vincent Sheehan, and Senator Ralph E. Flanders, none of whom can be accused of admiring Senator McCarthy.

Senator Allen J. Ellender, a bitter foe of "McCarthyism," has appeared on several Facts Forum shows. "I have no complaints whatsoever . . ." he declares. "I was given full opportunity to present my views in a fair debate."

Nevertheless, the false charges against Facts Forum continue. Those dedicated to extirpating "McCarthyism" use all the techniques they attribute to the Senator in a campaign of vilification that has become standard operating procedure for "liberals" seeking to maintain their dominance of all media of communication.

Take a column written by Marquis Childs last January. Mr. Childs states that an Eisenhower official, "deeply concerned over the threat of passage of the Bricker Amendment has heard that Hunt three or four times put up money to inspire a flood of telegrams favorable to the Amendment. While this report could not be verified since neither Hunt nor anyone for him would answer a query, it may well be true."

Shades of "McCarthyism." If the report could not be verified, why did our great "liberal" columnist repeat it?

Also constantly repeated is the threadbare yarn that Robert E. Lee was appointed a member of the F.C.C. by the President at the behest of Senator McCarthy. Mr. Lee, whose outstanding record of public service (including a lengthy stint as an FBI official) can't be impugned, has also been accused of having moderated several Facts Forum shows. Talk about "guilt by association."

Mr. Lee's eventual confirmation by the Senate, following "an ordeal by slander" unparalleled in recent history, was characterized by Jimmy Wechsler in the *N.Y. Post* as "desolate news for the country." Completely ignored, of course, was the fact that Senator McCarthy had nothing to do with the Lee appointment.

Getting back to Facts Forum, it would be a good idea for the Reece Committee to give it a no-holds-barred investigation, as demanded by the irate Mr. Hays. Spokesmen for Facts Forum, including Hardy Burt and Robert H. Dedmon, have indicated their willingness to go under oath.

"Facts Forum welcomes investigation," they stated. "Properly conducted investigations are the means by which questions are answered, issues are resolved and doubts removed from the public mind."

Would that certain other foundations take the same attitude!

VICTOR LASKY, co-author of *Seeds of Treason,* edited *The American Legion Reader.*

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HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* — *Contributing Editors:* FRANK CHODOROV, WILLIS J. BALLINGER

Vol. XI, No. 28 — Wednesday, July 14, 1954 — Washington, D. C.

Thunder Over China: Bill Knowland remains the "man of the hour" in the Capital. The Republican Majority Leader stirred the country with his threat that he would move for withdrawal of the U.S. from the United Nations if Red China should gain admittance to that body. He did more: according to advices from London, he scared the daylights out of Churchill. The latter's speech on Monday promising not to push for Red China's admission "at this moment" was actually stronger than news dispatches indicated. Dulles' sudden trip to Paris was due to Churchill's switch — according to Constantine Brown, well-informed Foreign Editor of the Washington *Star*. It was a gesture of gratitude to Churchill for the alteration in his position.

It is also reported that Knowland got a promise from the President that the latter would call Congress back into session, if it seems likely that the UN Assembly will try to vote the Peiping Government into that organization. (The UN meets in September while Congress will be on vacation.)

Meanwhile mail on the Hill indicates strong support of Knowland and many out in the country want to go farther — to get the U.S. out of the UN no matter what happens. Some recall that the U.S. Delegate to the UN, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, opposed admission of the Red regime because a "criminal" power should not sit in the UN. But what, it is asked, is Soviet Russia but a "criminal" power? Yet we continue — it is pointed out — to sit in the same organization with this international felon.

Not Merely Gossip: If Dewey decides to leave politics (and that's an open question these days), it is reported that he will specialize in the practice of anti-trust law. In short, he would offer his services as counsel to large corporations which are sued or likely to be sued by the U.S. Government for "conspiracy in restraint of trade." Those who have heard this talk readily note that — in such an eventuality — Dewey would find himself pitted against the Anti-Trust Division of the Department of Justice whose chief is Dewey's lieutenant, Herbert Brownell.

● Observers credited Sen. McCarthy with a victory when it was announced that Ike had appointed Mr. Herbert Hoover and General Mark Clark to look into the functioning of the Central Intelligence Agency. The announcement followed shortly after the Senator from Wisconsin expressed his intention of probing the CIA himself. The selection of these two men draws widespread approval. Hoover's fine record speaks for itself. The naming of General Clark is found to be probably of good augury. He is regarded as an "independent" among the generals, belonging neither to the Marshall nor the MacArthur cliques among regular Army officers.

● Praise is bestowed upon Democratic Senate Leader Lyndon Johnson for his prompt backing of Senator Knowland when the latter initially asserted the U.S. must get out of the UN if Red China is admitted to that body. Johnson previously had been a follower of the UN and of the internationalist school of thought.

● The House Un-American Activities Committee has sent out a task force to gather evidence on the nation's bigots, like Gerald L. K. Smith, for open hearings sometime in September. House investigators are now in New York seeking possible links between some anti-Semitic fanatics and the Communist conspiracy, which loves to use the crackpots for propaganda advantage.

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● How the Commie claque operates. Recently, just before Walter Winchell went on the air at the ABC studios in New York, the TV station's switchboards received a half-dozen calls from irate citizens — all complaining of Winchell's handling of the McCarthy case — before the commentator had even gone on the air and mentioned the case!

● As an instance of how badly the United States Information Agency works (see last week's article, "Our Propagandists Are The False Voice Of Americans" by Eugene Castle), a recent paragraph in a letter to the Nation (June 19, 1954) is noted. It seems that Arthur Miller, author of "Death of a Salesman," was recently invited to attend the opening in Brussels of his latest play, "The Crucible." The State Department turned down Miller's request for a passport. At the opening of "The Crucible" were ministers of the Belgian Government, a representative of the King and many other high dignitaries of the diplomatic circle, including the *American Ambassador and the entire staff of the U.S. Information Agency*. (Our emphasis). Quite an ovation, considering that the USIA naturally knew Miller had been denied a passport.

Foreign Aid: Many Washington observers are disturbed at the Eisenhower Administration's insistence on handing out $3½ billions more to the so-called free world. Before the election of 1952, millions of voters who pulled the Republican lever hoped that a Republican Administration would first drastically reduce and then wind up all foreign aid.

But from the inception of the Eisenhower Administration the emphasis has been consistently on continuing foreign aid indefinitely. Last year Ike himself declared that such aid was necessary for *at least twenty years*. This greatly pleased the internationalists whose goal is to commit the United States to a perpetual handout to foreign countries.

In view of what has happened in the past year the present foreign aid budget of the Administration seems somewhat ridiculous. To date our taxpayers have given the French Government over $2 billions to fight its war in Indo-China though the French have refused to draft a single Frenchman for that war. The conflict in Indo-China is now about to end, either through an armistice on Communist terms or by total defeat of French forces. Yet the Administration is requesting additional hundreds of millions for the Indo-China scrap, which all signs indicate will be out of existence shortly. Surely those millions could be saved.

But — ask informed observers — why any more foreign aid to Western Europe, particularly to England? Churchill has made it abundantly clear that he basically is for appeasing Russia. Churchill did talk about rearming Germany, but observers here feel that he had his tongue in his cheek — that this was a gesture only to keep the money flowing into Europe from the pockets of our taxpayers.

Military experts know that even if the contemplated 12 German divisions were added to NATO that NATO would still be helpless to resist successfully a Russian invasion of Western Europe by way of the Rhine. And they have known since NATO began that if NATO ever did show signs of developing into any effective threat against USSR the Soviets would move swiftly and effectively to take over Western Europe. These military experts say that NATO exists only to lure American tax dollars into Europe.

Finally, Congressman Lawrence Smith (R., Wis.) points out that foreign aid has an unexpended balance of *over $10 billions*. Why, therefore, should Congress appropriate more billions for foreign aid? Particularly in view of our "Allies' " appeasement of Russia.

The *Daily Worker* boasts that Churchill's appeasement attitude toward Russia and the recent rapprochement between Red China and Nehru's India brings 1,500,000,000 people within the orbit of Red influence — practically 75% of the world's total population. Faced with this terrifying reality the United States has only two choices. One — to play the Russian trade appeasement game until Russia

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is strong enough industrially to stage a show-down with us. Two — to realize that isolationism is being forced upon us by our own Allies, and therefore to cut off all foreign aid and spend our defense funds on American and Western Hemisphere military power.

Who Do You Know: Or, should it be whom? Anyhow, you know at least one person who ought to be reading HUMAN EVENTS. Send us his name and address, so that we may contact him. A hundred names would be better. (We promise not to mention your name in writing prospects.)

Politics: An on-the-spot survey conducted by this column over last weekend produced some impressions hardly conducive to the pleasure of the White House Palace Guard. The survey canvassed opinion in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut — boss-ridden states (the bosses are GOP) where "liberalism," GOP variety, and corruption go hand in hand.

In New York, there is a primary contest in the 1st Congressional District on Long Island between the incumbent Representative Wainwright, a supporter of Ike, and William P. Shea, who wants the U.S. to get out of the UN and who supports Sen. McCarthy. The incumbent has organization support and should win, for "primary day is politicians' day." But what that may do to Rep. Wainwright when he faces the Democrat next November may be another matter — so runs the talk.

In Connecticut, we gather, Governor Lodge is due to be defeated by his Democratic opponent, Rep. Abraham Ribicoff. The redoubtable Vivien Kellems is running as an Independent candidate and is expected to subtract a large conservative GOP vote from the regular Republican ballot. Lodge has played "liberal" and run roughshod over the conservative element in his party, including important political leaders.

In New Jersey, Clifford Case, "liberal" Republican and a White House favorite, is likely to be defeated by his Democratic opponent, for the Senatorial seat. Case is endorsed by the socialistic ADA. A month ago, we reported it was estimated that 50,000 conservative, pro-Taft voters would desert Case to vote for the Democrat. Last weekend, we heard this estimate "upped." Democrats — jubilant over the situation — believe it's "in the bag."

What is startling in all these cases is the attitude of some conservative Republicans who — we found — were all for the defeat of their party's candidates. Their position might be summed up as: "It's better to go down in defeat, and then reorganize with new leadership in preparation for 1956."

Red Cross: Jessie Sumner, former Congresswoman from Illinois, is preparing to ride again — and fireworks are expected. In Congress from 1938-46 (she retired voluntarily) Miss Sumner established herself as one of the ablest and most fearless critics of Democratic policies.

Jessie wants a public inquiry into the operations of the American Red Cross. While in Congress she became convinced that Red Cross funds were being employed for questionable political purposes, and since leaving Congress she has been quietly gathering facts to support a probe of the organization.

Miss Sumner wants to know: (1) Is the American Red Cross controlled by the Federal government? For a number of years the President appointed its Chairman but control of the organization was supposed to be vested in private sponsors and their nominees. In 1947, however, Congress passed legislation under which the President appoints all 12 members of the governing board of the Red Cross. (2) It is said that the books of the organization are audited by the Department of Defense and Miss Sumner feels that they should be audited by the General Accounting Office which has a more independent status. (3) Is any Red Cross money still going to Iron Curtain countries under the plea of humanitarianism? (4) How much of its annual budget does the Red Cross expend on international

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projects and what are the projects? (5) How much of the personnel of the Red Cross is left wing or worse? (6) Did the New Deal use the Red Cross for patronage purposes? (7) Is it true that, when the Red-infiltrated UNRRA passed out of existence after rendering much service to the Kremlin, many of its personnel were absorbed into the Red Cross?

Finally Miss Sumner has grave doubts about the Junior Red Cross — says she believes that this organization which has intimate contacts with millions of young Americans is indoctrinating them with the idea of world government.

Break With Russia: General A. C. Wedemeyer, author of the famous, long-concealed report on China, testified on June 10 in favor of severance of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and its satellites. Before Senators Jenner and Welker of the Internal Security Subcommittee, Wedemeyer said:

"Proponents of continued diplomatic relations with the Communist countries have often stated that if we were to break off diplomatic relations with them, that we would close windows through which they can observe developments in countries behind the Iron Curtain. When we send diplomatic representatives to any country, we do so in keeping ethical arrangements, whereby our representatives are honor bound to respect the laws, the customs and the traditions of the country in which they are serving. Our foreign representatives behind the Iron Curtain have experienced, and continue to experience insults, humiliations, harassments and restrictions which unquestionably preclude the effective performance of their duties.

"Furthermore the United States has been greatly restricted, unreasonably so, with regard to the number of representatives we are permitted to maintain in our embassies, legations or official agencies behind the Iron Curtain. . . . Conversely, and stupidly, we permit the Reds to maintain their embassies, legations and agencies within our borders, extending naively every facility and courtesy in consonance with the traditional diplomatic code of ethics and international law. We must recognize that every representative of a Communist country, enjoying our hospitality and the usual diplomatic immunities within our borders, is a provocateur, saboteur, propaganda agent, spy and potential murderer, for he is thoroughly indoctrinated and fanatically believes that the 'end justifies the means'."

Easy Money: Sound and "good" money was the aim of the Eisenhower Administration when it took office and, no doubt, still is. However, the July 1 issue of the conservative Wall Street weekly, *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* comments tartly: "Just how much improvement has there really been in the management of our financial affairs? In what sense is the Federal Reserve more 'independent' than it was in the early days. . . . Are we really justified in going back largely to the old system of coining Treasury deficits into money and trying to abolish interest rates? Possibly this unadorned way of putting the questions may not be pleasing, but it seems to us that the time has come for some plain speech. . . . Only a thin line separates the present situation from the one prevailing under pegged Government bonds."

Nor is the *Chronicle* the only displeased conservative. The monthly *Monetary Notes*, published by the Economists National Committee on Monetary Policy, has been criticizing right along the Republican Administration for carrying forward the New Deal gold and silver programs, for renewing the $5 billion authority for direct purchase of U.S. obligations by the Federal Reserve from the Treasury and for "outdoing the New Deal" by repealing provisions of Section 16 of the Federal Reserve Act. The Administration's position on gold *Monetary Notes* labels "the first opportunity in 21 years to get a sound currency (gold coinage) bungled and thrown away by Treasury and Federal Reserve authorities."

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